

# Analyzing Table 4 and 4b for Program Improvement

## Tables 4 & 4b

The data on Tables 4 & 4b of the Annual Performance Report (APR) reflect the educational gains of enrolled students. Table 4 contains the total number of enrolled students, their contact hours, and gains in each educational functioning level. Table 4b contains the same information, but only for learners who were post-tested. An educational gain is made when a learner's scores on the post-test place him/her in an educational functioning level above his/her entry level.

There are four potential causes for low percentages on these tables, and the data will help reveal which, if any, is a concern in your local program.

1. **Low Retention Rates** – Students must attend a minimum number of hours to be post-tested. To determine if this is a problem in your program or class, divide the number of attendance hours on Table 4 (Column C) by the total number enrolled (Column B). If you determine that students are not attending long enough to post-test, consider the following:
  - a. Review intake procedures. If your program practices open entry/open exit, consider changing to managed intake.
  - b. Survey students who have left to determine why they left before achieving their educational goals.
  - c. Review the number of hours classes are offered each week. The more hours of class available for learners to attend, the more likely they will be able to post-test.
2. **Students are not being post-tested** – If retention is not a problem, divide the numbers in Column B on Table 4b by the numbers in the same column on Table 4. This will give you the percentage of students who are being post-tested. If less than 50% of learners have been post-tested, consider the following:
  - a. Require an attendance spreadsheet that is kept up to date each day of class and shows the cumulative hours a learner has attended so staff will know which students have enough hours to be post-tested.
  - b. Set up a review team to compare student hours and post-testing by class on a regular basis.
3. **Students are being post-tested but not making gains** – Look at the Percentage Completing a Level in Column H of Table 4b. If this percentage is less than 70%, your program may have an instructional problem, an assessment problem, or both. Consider the following:
  - a. Does assessment match instruction? For example, are you assessing life skills, but teaching academic skills outside of a life skills context?
  - b. Is assessment consistently administered in a standardized way?
  - c. Is instruction relevant and varied?
4. **The paperwork flow or data entry procedures are flawed** – If staff believes that the reports do not reflect what is happening in the classroom, consider the following:
  - a. Run monthly class-specific reports for staff to review.
  - b. Then begin to analyze data flow breakdowns. Is staff turning in student data? Is the system for submitting data efficient and understood by all staff? Is data that is submitted accurate and readable? Is data being entered into the software accurately and in a timely manner?

Enlist staff to help craft solutions to problems revealed through your analysis. Though these suggestions are just the beginning of your analysis of educational gains, it will get you started on a path which will help your students achieve gains and your program to improve outcomes.